THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) At the 49th meeting of the National Development Council (NDC) held on 1st September, 2001 the Chief Minister of Rajasthan, besides raising other issues of general concern to States, made a special plea that Rajasthan be granted special category state status. Rajasthan does not fulfill the existing criteria for granting special category status. However, the said meeting of the NDC decided that suggestions made before it for looking into the criteria for granting special category status to states should be examined.

Under utilisation of PMGY funds by States

1291. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only Rs. 480 crores or about 17 per cent of the additional Central Assistance earmarked for the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) during 2001-2002 has been released to the States in the first seven months of the current financial year;

(b) if so, the reasons for poor utilisation of the allocated funds; and

(c) the steps initiated towards better and speedier utilisation of the earmarked funds and also to fine tune the monitoring system for timely warnings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) A provision of Rs.2800 crore has been made for Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) during 2001-02. Out of this amount, Additional Central Assistance (ACA) of Rs.557.32 crore has been released to the States in the first seven months of the current financial year 2001-02. However, an amount of Rs.1566.02 crore has been released for PMGY upto 05.02.2002.

(b) The release of funds under PMGY to the States is based on the utilisation of the funds sanctioned earlier.

(c) In order to make the programme more effective, the revised modalities for implementation of the PMGY will be spelt out in the Tenth Plan, which is under preparation.

Problems of Aluminium Industry and Bauxite Mines

1292. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is Government's approach in the tenth five year plan with respect to the related problems of Aluminium Industry and Bauxite Mines regarding reduction of refractory grade bauxite from China;

(b) the steps for measuring the Aluminium production and export so as to compare with China in international market;

(c) the steps taken to exploit the under-developed reserve of bauxite in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) how do Government propose to improve the percentage of primary metal production met out from recycling of scrap?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (d) The sectoral issues and details are covered in the Plan document and not in the approach paper. The Tenth Plan document is under preparation. The aluminium production and export is monitored by the Department of Mines, Ministry of Mines and Coal and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Mineral sector has been opened up to the private sector. Therefore, exploitation of under-developed bauxite deposits in the country will be done by the private sector depending upon the techo-economic viability. The secondary aluminium production from scrap only supplements the primary aluminium production and techo-economic considerations have to be kept in view while doing so.